To: Card, Joan[Card.Joan@epa.gov]
From: Ackerman, Joyce
Sent: Fri 8/7/2015 7:40:52 PM
Subject: FW: Sampling process

Sampling Process

Sampling crews have been and will be sampling locations from Silverton (and above Silverton, near the Mine), all the way to the Colorado border, a distance of approximately 60 miles. Crews will also sample in New Mexico. The distance between sampling locations involves driving time, especially where sampling locations on the river are in remote, difficult to access locations.

Samples are taken from the river using a hand pump or peristaltic pump. Samples must be filtered. Once at the location, collecting the sample may take ½ hour or more.

The standard procedure for analyzing for metals requires a 16 hour hold time with the preservative. EPA will be modifying this procedure to reduce or eliminate this hold time.

The samples must then be transported to a laboratory, either hand-delivered or shipped. Actual analysis time may be approximately 5 hours at a medium size lab. Small labs may require much longer, and may only be able to guarantee a 24-48 turnaround time.

Laboratory analysis has a number of quality assurance/quality control steps that are mandatory including calibrations and running blanks, to ensure that the quality of the data is reliable.

The first round of 19 samples collected the evening of the spill and morning following were

immediately driven to the EPA laboratory in Denver and prepped for analysis. Those lab results should be available shortly.

The laboratory in Durango has been extremely cooperative and helpful and plans to work through the weekend for this project; however, it is a small capacity lab and will likely not be able to process the high volume of samples anticipated to be taken. EPA is exploring options for procuring another lab, which will involve driving or shipping samples for delivery.

Joyce Ackerman

On-Scene Coordinator and START P.O.

U.S. EPA Region 8

1595 Wynkoop Street

Denver, CO 80202

(303) 312-6822